

Have You Heard About MRSA?



What is MRSA?

Local and national news stories are reporting an increase in **Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus** or **MRSA** infections. **MRSA** is a kind of Staphylococci or “**staph**” infection that has become resistant to most antibiotics. Usually staph live on the skin and in the nose without causing harm.

The **# 1** way to protect your home and your family against MRSA and other diseases and infections is to **wash your hands** with **liquid soap** and warm running water for 20 seconds

What does MRSA look like?

Most often, MRSA causes infections on the skin. These infections may look like any one of the following:

- ✓ Large, red, painful bumps under the skin (called boils or abscesses)
- ✓ A cut that is swollen, hot and filled with pus
- ✓ Blisters filled with pus (called impetigo)
- ✓ Sores that look and feel like spider bites (However, MRSA is not caused by a spider bite or any other insect bite.)

Ways to protect your family & your home:



1. **WASH YOUR HANDS FREQUENTLY!**
2. Carry a small container of hand sanitizer in your car, purse, locker, backpack, desk, etc.
3. Use **liquid soap** not bar soap for hand washing and bathing.
4. Do not to share personal items such as clothes, towels, toothbrushes, razors, tweezers, etc.
5. **Locker rooms** are fully of **germs**, make sure your children have **flip flops** for gym showers and that *all towels and gym clothes/uniforms are laundered regularly.*
6. Personal hygiene is important to prevent disease and infection. Take a **shower** everyday & after physical activity (especially contact sports) to **wash off the germs**.
7. **Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a dry bandage until healed. No sports (with ANY contact) until the sore is gone.**
8. Clean hard surfaces (door knobs, light switches, counter tops) in your home with a solution of 1 tablespoon of bleach in 1 quart of water or disposable disinfectant wipes.
9. Use the inside of your elbow to cover sneezes and coughs. **MRSA loves to live in the moist membranes of the nose.**
10. Remember things that touch you, touch your germs. Throw tissues away after one use and first aid items such as tweezers will carry staph (MRSA) from one person to another VERY easily.
11. **FINALLY....WASH YOUR HANDS FREQUENTLY!**

When should you call the doctor?

- ✓ If there are new symptoms during or after treatment for a MRSA skin infection such as a new fever or a fever that won't go away
- ✓ If the infection gets worse
- ✓ If the infection is not healing
- ✓ If the infection comes back
- ✓ If you have questions



For more information regarding MRSA infections and prevention go to:

http://www3.doh.wa.gov/here/materials/PDFs/12_MRSApage_E07L.pdf